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575 sciously fostered by some elements in the
794 Church, probably the same groups fostering the
Sinarquista movement in the adjoining region
668 of the Bajío north of Tarascan territory.[82]
578 Additional data on the change in attitude of the church in Cherán will be presented under religion.

CONFLICT AND LAW

578 The people of Cherán are very reticent about
[186] conflicts within the town. Efforts are made to convince the outsider that the town is a harmonious unit, and it is very difficult to secure data to the contrary. The impression, after many months in Cherán, is that a great deal of hostility underlies the apparent harmony. In part, this is apparent in the prevalence of witchcraft and some of the evidence is presented under that heading. Interfamily and intrafamily jealousies and conflicts, however carefully concealed, cropped up time and again in casual remarks. Nevertheless, little definite information could be secured. Any efforts to pick up the small leads occurring in conversation were usually adroitly countered. Consequently, the material presented in this section consists primarily of the more overt conflicts which, under certain circumstances, lead to official interference.

578 A great variety of minor conflicts constantly
626 reach the office of the mayor. Many of these never pass the stage of discussion and informal settlement. For example, a man had been drunk all week, insulting people indiscriminately. One man finally struck the drunkard. The case was discussed at length. Some argued that the drunkard should be arrested. Others claimed that both should be arrested. Ultimately, nothing was done, but as anyone present in the *municipio* could enter the discussion, word probably got around to both parties. The drunkard's relatives probably restrained him and the man giving the blows kept out of sight.

● 695 Another case illustrates the handling of
685 minor offenses. A woman was brought before the acting mayor (the mayor's alternate), charged with stealing a blanket from a man while he was drunk. The woman was accused vigorously by the acting mayor but denied the

[82] Evidence for this statement cannot be given at this time.

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695 charge with equal vigor. Finally the acting mayor ordered that she be locked up, and, 685 despite voluble protests against injustice, the woman was conveyed forcibly to the jail. The whole procedure seemed very high-handed, but when the woman was out of earshot, the acting mayor turned to me mildly and remarked that he would not have acted that way on the man's word alone but there had been two witnesses and there was no doubt of the woman's guilt. He was trying to frighten the woman into a confession and restitution of the blanket, with which he would be content to dismiss the case.

Several drunks on the morning of October 3 689 created a commotion. Two got into a fight and were locked up. The rest were not molested.

On another day, two women were noticed in the jail. One said the other had thrown a gourd at her head. The second accused the first of stealing something from her lot. They were both thrown in jail to cool off.

A little girl was "horsing around"—to use 627 the phrase of Augustín Rangel—near one of the street-corner vendors. The woman told her to go away, but the girl's mother did not interfere. In the mother's absence the girl broke some pottery. The two women began to quarrel and finally went to the mayor's office. After discussion, the woman with the pottery was advised to be more careful of her goods when there were children around.

Three men walked down the street, in various stages of drunkenness. Two began to quarrel and the drunkest of the three picked up a rock and threatened one of the men. The third man interposed himself, talked soothingly, eventually got the rock away from the drunken man, and they continued their walk.

One drunken man kept saying to another "You are rich and can do everything you want and I have nothing." The second man ignored this. After a while the first man said, "I don't care if you are rich, you —— —— ——," and then began commenting on the man's mother. The second man said, "Take back what you said about my mother." The first man said, "Never." Then they began to fight. Nothing was done about this.

681 The cases given above represent conflicts which resulted in no official punishment. Con-